

DOING BUSINESS WITH THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How can I find out more information on Financial/Bond Assistance?

There are no County programs to provide assistance in obtaining bonds or financial assistance in meeting contract requirements. The Federal Small Business Administration's Office of Surety Guarantees has a program that may help small businesses succeed in obtaining bonds, please visit their website <http://www.sba.gov/aboutsba/sbaprograms/osg/index.html> for more information.

Additionally, the requirements for bonds vary greatly between contract solicitations and it is the proposer's responsibility to meet the terms of the contract solicitation. Some contract solicitations give the County the discretion to accept cash or a letter of credit (NOT a line of credit) from a County approved institution in lieu of a bond.

In the County's solicitation documents, the County details the eligibility requirements for such institutions. It is the proposer's responsibility to perform the necessary due diligence, financial preparation, and research to find eligible surety or lending firms and to meet their financial requirements for obtaining a bond or letter of credit.

[Click here to view list of Active Surety Companies and Bond Agencies near you.](#)

2. How can small businesses get County projects?

In order to do business with the County of Los Angeles, you must first be registered in the County's vendor registration system. This process alerts the County of your services and will alert you of upcoming events and bid opportunities. The registration process can be done electronically at the website: http://doingbusiness.lacounty.gov/vendor_reg.htm

After successfully registering, you may compete on all solicitations for services or construction that your business can perform. As an added benefit, you may apply for the Local Small Business Enterprise (LSBE) certification program (if all qualification requirements are met). Nearly all County contracts are awarded on a competitive basis. The competition may be based on different criteria such as low-bid, best qualified, or highest rated.

Small businesses compete very well on many solicitations and are routinely awarded contracts for services and construction.

3. What is the Local Small Business Enterprise Program (LSBE)?

The County established a LSBE program to enhance contracting opportunities for small businesses located within the County of Los Angeles. To participate in the County's program, a small business must **first** be certified as a small business

by the State of California and have its principal office in Los Angeles County for at least 12 months. The State (www.getcertified.dgs.ca.gov) will certify a small business that has less than 100 employees and annual revenue of less than \$12 million over a three year period. The County gives a 5% preference (up to \$50,000) to an LSBE when evaluating price for scoring purposes. Here is how the preference can help a small business:

Large company bids \$200.

LSBE company bids \$208, but is given a 5% scoring preference calculated from the low bid. Here the low bid is \$200 and the 5% preference is \$10. The LSBE is scored as bidding \$198 based on their bid of \$208 minus the \$10 preference. The LSBE now becomes the low bid but still gets paid \$208.

In addition, the County has provisions for small businesses where they are exempt from standard contract terms such as the requirement to pay the Living Wage or provide employees paid time to perform Jury Duty.

4. What is the success rate of low bid competition?

Low bid competition is a highly successful process. The County awards contracts to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder.

5. Does the County perform audits?

Yes, on certain contracts there are wage requirements that mandate the County to audit the contractor to ensure that the appropriate wages are being paid to their employees. These contracts may require payment by the contractor to its employees of either a Prevailing Wage or a Living Wage. On Living Wage contracts, monthly payroll reports are reviewed and there is an annual audit conducted to ensure that the reports are accurate. In addition, some contract solicitations may require the submission of a proposer's financial information. Although the County does not perform a technical audit, the submitted information is reviewed in detail.

6. Do you need to be a union member to receive jobs?

No, you do not have to be a member of a union to be awarded and perform work on County projects.

No, you do not need to be a union member to hire temporary subsidized stimulus workers [through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Emergency Contingency Fund (ECF) funds].

7. How can I obtain general information on County contracts?

Go to: www.dpw.lacounty.gov/business and/or
http://doingbusiness.lacounty.gov/main_db.htm

8. Can I apply for projects if I live in another county?

Yes.

9. How can I obtain the plan holder's list, is it online?

The plan holders lists for a specific project can be obtained by going to the business website: www.dpw.lacounty.gov/business and by clicking on "Bid Information" and then "Open Construction Bids."

10. Can we obtain plans and specifications (specs) electronically, on a CD, or access online?

Plans and specs can be obtained by going to the business website www.dpw.lacounty.gov/business and by clicking on "Bid Information" and then "Open Construction Bids."

11. Does the County have residential construction jobs?

We do not have residential construction jobs.

12. Can I obtain plans on AutoCAD?

The County does not offer plans on AutoCAD.

13. How can I find out more information on the subsidized work force?

Interested businesses/trainers should first register as a work site with the Southbay Workforce Investment Board (WIB), and if they are interested in offering training, they should get on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)/Intrastate Training Resources and Information Network (I-TRAIN) list. Additional information can be found at www.I-Train.org.

14. How do I know if my line of services are of interest to the County?

Please register as a County Vendor and gauge the interest level and feedback you receive once registered.

15. How can we supply biodiesel to local fleets?

Please register as a County Fuel Vendor.

16. Are there any Green/Energy efficiency opportunities for county buildings?

Yes, many County building projects will require Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification. In addition, periodically the County hires Green/Energy efficiency consultants for related services. Please monitor the website: www.dpw.lacounty.gov/business for opportunities.

17. Do you solicit for temporary housing?

The Department of Public Works typically does not solicit temporary housing, except for construction site temporary offices for County personnel which may be included in the construction contract.

18. Is there any upcoming work planned for Colima Road?

Please check the website: www.dpw.lacounty.gov/business for specific projects.